

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION REQUEST

The following constitutes an application for preliminary consideration for the nomination potential of a property to the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. This does not mean that a property is being nominated to the registers at this time. Rather it is being evaluated to determine if it qualifies for such listings. Applicants will be notified of the board's actions in writing shortly after the meeting.

Please **type** and use 8-1/2" X 11" paper if additional space is needed.

All submitted materials become the property of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources and cannot be returned.

1. HISTORIC NAME OF PROPERTY (if historic name is not known, use current name of area)

RIVERVIEW

2. LOCATION

A. Street or Route Columbus Avenue, 39th Street, 40th Street, 41st Street, 42nd Street, Holly Avenue

B. County or City Norfolk, Virginia

3. LEGAL OWNER/S OF PROPERTIES. Include names and addresses of all property owners in district. Attach additional sheets if necessary. (See Attached)

Name:

Address:

City/State: _____ ZIP

4. GENERAL DATA

A. Date or dates of selected buildings: First quarter 20th century

B. Approximate acreage: 50 acres

C. Architects or carpenter/masons (if known):

D. Primary Use of Buildings: Residential; Single-family

5. GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Located on the west side of the Lafayette River and north of downtown Norfolk, Riverview is a cohesive residential community on the west side of Granby Street, just north of the zoological park. The proposed historic district is bounded on the west by Columbus Avenue and the commercial Granby Street corridor and bounded on the east and north by the Lafayette River. The southern boundary of the proposed historic district is formed by 39th Street.¹

The neighborhood is defined by its well-landscaped streets; its large lot sizes; and its well-built and substantial detached houses. The area is laid out as a series of diagonal streets running between a curved and straight street. The curved street, Holly Avenue, forms the outside edge of the neighborhood along the Lafayette River, while Columbus Avenue, a north-south axis, forms the western edge of the neighborhood. The numbered streets

¹ Although the areas south of 39th Street and west of Columbus Avenue are today considered part of Riverview, these areas were not part of the original development of Riverview Park, as shown on the 1900 Bowman Map. The area south of 39th Street, including Ethel and Lucille Avenues, is called Riverside Park on the 1900 Bowman Map of Norfolk. Architecturally, the houses on these two streets are much more modest in size, are set on smaller lots, and lack the landscaping attention paid to the area forming the original Riverview development. Also, there is more modern infill, compromising the overall architectural integrity of these two streets. West of Columbus Road the area is less cohesive and includes later (mid-20th century architecture) that differs in building type and style from that found in the original Riverview development.

run diagonally between Holly Street and Columbus Street, and then run perpendicularly out of the proposed historic district to Granby Street. The houses aligning the diagonal avenues face the street, while those of Holly Avenue are oriented towards the water and have their rear elevations towards the public street. One example of modern infill within the district is located at 121 Holly Avenue. The house is sympathetic in terms of size and scale, but lacks the characterizing architectural features which define the neighborhood (landscaping, front porch, attention to detailing).

The houses are set back from the road with sidewalks and yards buffering them from the public right-of-way. They are located approximately 20 feet from one another and have driveways between them. Large, deciduous shade trees are planted in a grassy median between the street and sidewalks, giving the houses a greater sense of privacy.

The neighborhood consists of a cohesive group of single-family dwellings which generally date from the first two decades of the 20th century and a small collection of individual apartment buildings from the mid-20th century. The single-family dwellings present a mix of early 20th-century styles and dwelling types. The most predominant house forms are bungalows with craftsman detailing and American four-square-type houses designed in the vernacular Colonial Revival style. At least two imposing and transitional Queen Anne/Colonial Revival style houses are found amongst the bungalows, while a brick Tudor Revival style house is unique to the neighborhood. While most of the house forms and styles can be found co-existing side-by-side, one row of craftsman bungalows forms a cohesive group on the south side of 40th Street. These three bungalows are 1-1/2-story, frame structures with wide, overhanging gable roofs and central gable dormers. The feature front porches incorporated into the roof and supported by squat, brick piers. The bracketed roof, paired windows and attention to detail mark these as a good, local example of the craftsman style.

Brick and frame structures are equally well represented in the neighborhood as are a number of architectural features. These features, which help define the neighborhood architecturally, include the single-story, open, front porches; the hipped roofs; and dormer windows. In general, the dwellings are in excellent condition with much of their original materials intact. The use of vinyl siding and asphalt shingles, is not however, uncommon.

The largest, most prominent houses are those found along Holly

Avenue and facing the water. Of particular note is the Consolvo House (122-112) prominently located at the corner of Holly Avenue and 42nd Street. This imposing 2-1/2-story frame dwelling, which was home to C.H. Consolvo, a prominent Norfolk businessman from 1911 to 1918, is designed in a transitional Queen Anne/Colonial Revival style. It features a wrap-around front porch which takes advantage of the view to the water. While the house is nestled closely to the corner formed by the streets, it offers its owners a large yard between it and the water front.

The Topping House (122-134), located at Holly Avenue and 39th Street and originally owned by Arthur B. Topping, a pilot, is designed in a Spanish Revival/Mission style of architecture. Though not representative of the area architecture, this particular revival style is found sporadically throughout the Riverview and Colonial Place neighborhoods.

Also of particular note is the Wolcott House (122-133) at 224 41st Street. Built ca. 1910 for W.H. Wolcott, an attorney with the firm of Jeffries, Wolcott, Wolcott and Lankford, this is a large, 2-1/2-story brick structure designed in a Colonial Revival style. The house, urban in feeling, is more high-style and more representative of the architecture of North Ghent than the typical vernacular house found in Riverview.

The apartment buildings of the neighborhood are located on 39th Street. A pair of ca. 1930s apartment buildings, located at 236 and 240 39th Street, stand four stories tall and feature three-story front porches. Constructed of red brick and designed in a Colonial Revival style, these apartment buildings fit well into the overall character of the neighborhood. In contrast, the Wales Apartment building on 40th Street, between Columbus and Granby and located just outside the proposed historic district, is a larger-scale apartment which has little association with the neighborhood dwellings. It is four stories tall and is designed in an Art Moderne style with Art Deco detailing.

6. HISTORY

The planned residential community of Riverview was one of Norfolk's first streetcar suburbs to be built north of downtown along the north branch of the Lafayette River. Platted in 1900 and located along the Granby Street streetcar route, the area started to mature in the first decade of this century, and was almost fully developed by the late 1920s. Today, the neighborhood survives as a cohesive group of detached, single-family dwellings that are served by the commercial corridor of Granby Street.

Riverview Park was one of Norfolk's first streetcar suburbs to be built north of downtown along Tanner's Creek (north branch of the Lafayette River).² The subdivision was built on a peninsula of land that jutted into the Lafayette River; Church Street (Granby Street) was extended north from downtown with a streetcar line and served as the western boundary of the peninsula.³ The subdivision currently known as Riverview was laid out between 1889 and 1900 and actually included two separate developments: Riverview Park and Riverside Park. Riverview Park was defined by Columbus Avenue on the west, Holly Avenue on the north and east, and 39th Street on the south. Riverside Park included Lucille Avenue, Ethel Avenue and La Vallette Avenue. These two subdivisions are clearly visible today in terms of their street configuration, size and scale of architecture, and perhaps coincidentally, the level of replacement, or infill, architecture.⁴ Between the western boundary of the subdivision and the western boundary of Church Street were four blocks of land that remained unplatted in 1900. The streetcar line, which ran up Church Street, formed a circuit around the peninsula of land and the Riverview Park subdivision. Tracks are shown turning off of Church Street at Lucille Avenue, and then following Holly Street to its intersection at Church, to head back south to downtown Norfolk.

² According to the 1900 Bowman Map, Virginia Place is the only other subdivision in the area at that time. Colonial Place was platted shortly thereafter, in 1903; Crusier Place, Winona, Lafayette and the other area suburbs followed suit in the first decades of the 20th century.

³ The inlet of water which was west of Granby Street was filled in with land and developed with a residential community called Crusier Place. The peninsula land west of this inlet was the site of the Marsh Estate, and after its purchase in 1903 by the Sterling Development Company, the site of Colonial Place.

⁴ The area historically making up Riverside Park consists of smaller lot sizes, less substantial houses and a higher percentage of contemporary architecture.

Although fully platted by 1900, no buildings were as yet constructed in Riverview. The first house to be built in the platted subdivision was the Consolvo House, located at the corner of Holly Avenue and 42nd Street and constructed in the first years of this century. While conveniently located directly on the streetcar line, this house also took advantage of bucolic river views and a vast lawn leading to the river.

By 1910, according to the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map a total of 29 single-family, detached dwellings were standing in Riverview Park and five in Riverside Park. Each of these dwellings were generally two-story brick or frame structures with the primary defining characteristic being their wrap-around porches. These 29 houses were generally clustered in groups of three on large lots and scattered throughout the subdivision. One exception to this involves the house at 232(?) 39th Street, which stood quite alone on this stretch of 39th Street until the "teens" when the other houses on the block were built including 220 39th Street, built ca. 1913, and 218 39th Street, built ca. 1915.

By 1928, almost the entire subdivision was developed, as were the four blocks of land between the original boundaries of the subdivision and the outer edge and commercial strip of Granby Street. Only a few unbuilt lots were randomly found amongst the well-landscaped streets. After 1928, an imposing four-story, U-shaped apartment building was constructed at 236-240 40th Street, actually replacing a former single-family dwelling on the site. Although other apartment buildings, such as the Wales on 41st Street between Columbus Avenue and Granby Street, did rise in the area, the apartment at 236-240 40th Street was the only incidence of a multiple-family dwelling being built within the original subdivision boundaries.

By the mid-1960s, Riverview began to experience many of the same problems encountered by other Norfolk in-town suburbs. The residential architecture began to deteriorate due to neglect as residents moved further out to more modern suburbs and left the old behind; the area just south of Riverview in Park Place, changed from a relatively middle-class white area to a poor black one. This shift resulted from Norfolk's urban renewal downtown which caused blacks to move north and for whites to "flee" to all-white suburbs further away from downtown. In the late 1960s and 1970s, a Civic League was organized in Colonial Place which spearheaded efforts to stop blight, upgrade the neighborhood, and promote racial stability. As a result, Colonial Place is 65% white and 35% African American, while Riverview is predominantly

PIF--Riverview, Norfolk, VA
October 1994

white with some African American families.

Today Colonial Place and Riverview together are part of the city conservation district called Colonial Place-Riverview, where housing code standards are established and reviewed, along with zoning requirements and other pertinent issues.

7. PHOTOGRAPHS

Black and white photographs and color slides of general views and streetscapes must be provided. Photographs of important buildings in district would also be helpful. The inclusion of photographs is essential to the completion of this application. Without photographs, this application can not be considered.

Photocopies of select photos are attached; actual photos have been submitted in VDHR photo envelopes.

8. MAP

Please include a map showing the location of the proposed district. A sketch map is acceptable but please not street route numbers, addresses, buildings, prominent geographic features, etc. Please include a "north" arrow. This form can not be processed without a map showing the property's exact location.

See attached.

9. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

10: APPLICANT INFORMATION

NAME: _____ TELEPHONE:

ADDRESS:
CITY/STATE:

SIGNATURE

DATE:

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PROPERTY NAME: Riverview

**PLEASE SUPPLY THE FOLLOWING NAMES AND ADDRESSES AS APPLICABLE.
THIS INFORMATION MUST BE PROVIDED BEFORE YOUR PIF CAN BE
CONSIDERED BY THE STATE REVIEW BOARD:**

Mayor: Paul D. Fraim
1109 City Hall Building
Norfolk, VA 23501

City Manager:
James B. Oliver, Jr.
1101 City Hall Building
Norfolk, VA 23501

Director, Planning Division

John M. Dugan, Director
Dept. of City Planning and Codes Administration
508 City Hall Building

Chairman, Planning Commission

Dr. William L. Craig, Jr.
451 Lee Point Road
Norfolk, VA

Executive Director

Hampton Roads Planning District Commission
Arthur L. Collins
723 Woodlake Drive
Chesapeake, Virginia 23320

City Council member or Supervisor in whose district the property
is located:

Paul D. Fraim
Dr. Mason C. Andrews

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bowman, Sam, Atlas of Norfolk, Portsmouth, Berkley and Vicinity, 1900.

Colonial Place-Riverview Information Sheet, n.d. Vertical files, Seargent Room, Kirn Memorial Library, Norfolk.

"Historical Houses and Horticultural Hints," Colonial Place/Riverview Calendar, 1989.

Hopkins, G.M. Atlas of the City of Norfolk and Vicinity including the City of Portsmouth, 1889.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1910, 1928 (updated).